

In the Claims:

1. A data management system for identifying patterns in data, the system comprising an analysis engine for analysing relationships between responses made by a user to questions relating to a service or products, in which the analysis engine analyses responses made by a user to one or more constructs.
2. A data management system according to claim 1 in which analysis of the analysis engine involves a process of fuzzy entailment.
3. A data management system according to claim 1 in which each construct includes two distinct descriptive terms relating to things provided to users by operators of the system.
4. A data management system according to claim 3 in which the descriptive terms of each construct represent contrasting opinions of the thing.
5. A data management system according to claim 4 which obtains data from a user that represents a user's opinion of the thing in a range defined by the descriptive terms.
6. A data management system according to claim 5 in which there is defined a number of discrete selectable steps within the range, that number being referred to as a "mesh".
7. A data management system according to claim 6 in which the mesh is adjusted in reaction to inputs made by users.
8. A data management system according to claim 7 in which the mesh is iteratively reduced until a minimum mesh value that yields a meaningful result is identified.
9. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the construct is represented by visual control displayed in a graphical user interface on a computer screen.

10. A data management system according to claim 9 in which the user can input a value representative of their opinion by adjustment of the position of the control.
11. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the results of the analysis are used to deduce which items of information will be of interest to a particular user.
12. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the system executes on a server that communicates with a user over a network link.
13. A data management system according to claim 1 that includes a user data input component that executes in on a remote host system.
14. A data management system according to claim 13 in which the data input component is represented in the display generated by a web browser.
15. A data management system according to claim 13 in which the data input component is generated by an applet that is downloaded to the remote host from the server.
16. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the data is obtained by through use of a repertory grid.
17. A data management system according to claim 1 in which incomplete data is processed by matching those parts of the data that are present with characteristics of existing data.
18. A data management system according to claim 17 in which the incomplete data is subject to discriminant analysis.
19. A data management system according to claim 1 in which data is subject to a process of linearisation prior to its being analysed.

20. A data management system according to claim 19 in which the process of linearisation includes conversion of non-numeric data to a numeric form.
21. A data management system according to claim 1 in which users are the customers of a business and the output includes predictive information as to the future purchasing behaviour of the customers.
22. A data management system implemented as a computer software system.
23. A computer software product that implements a data management system according to claim 1.
24. A network server system operative to serve web pages to remote clients comprising a web server for generating HTML code to be rendered on a remote browser and an analysis server that implements a data management system according to claim 1, the data management system deriving input data from analysis of a user's interaction with one or more rendered web pages.